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LETTER OF THOMAS MATHEWS TO GEORGE FOX, 1683.

[Thomas Mathews was a son of Richard Mathews, of Stoke Newington, in the county of Middlesex, England. He came to the Province of West Jersey with his sister Hannah (who in 1684 was married to Thomas Gardner, Jr., at Burlington), and settled on a tract of land near Woodbury Creek, which had been conveyed to him by his father. In 1684 Edward Byllynge appointed him his attorney to dispose of thirty shares of propriety of West Jersey, and in 1685 he was returned as one of the members of the Legislature from the Fourth Tenth. He died about 1702, and his landed estate passed to his sister. The letter which we print is addressed, "For George Fox in London or Elſe where. Leaue this at Frances Plumſteds Ironmonger at ye Croſs hanſawes in the minneres [Minories] London." It is also endorsed, "Thos Mathews Letter to G. F. 11 4th M^o^: 83. About Tenths in W. J. & diviſion of Lands &c."]

WeſT NEW JARZEY IN AMERICE
BURLINTON ye 11th of ye 4th *mo 1683*

DEARE GEORGE

Hauing this oportunity by John Bartlit I wos willing to aquaint thee with ſom of ye affers of this Prouince sopoiſing there will bee neede of thy help to moderate & ſettell things heare which are at preſent But unſtable in Relation to Common affares: I beeleive thou knowes heretofore how things haue Bin that tho': oliue [Thomas Olive] & moſt of thoſe that Came with him mett with diſapointments hauing there Goods ſeaſed for Custom by new york Gouerment with other trubles which I had from his mouth that thay waire upon ye point of quiting ye place & Goe into ſom other Cuntry now ſince that Edward Byllyng with ye aſiſtance of his friends hath Gott ye dukes Confermation: ye Grate doubte is heare amongſt them whather hee will nott Impoiſe himſelf Gouerners ouer ouer them Louking upon it that thay haue bought both Land & Gouerment this is ye mind of moſt of them others of them ſay thay bought ye Gouerment but of 2 tenthes that is ye york & London tenth ſo that at this Rate wee ſhall haue variaty of Gouerments: this would

bee of an ill Confequance But oure Eye is to God: now Samuell Jenings & thay Rule all ye Cuntry & Clame ye Gouerment of all hee is a man moft Rafalute in whot hee takes too & Immouable & his maxim is to fplit a hare in Gouerning & keeps up ye Lettere of ye Law to its hight which has acaifened fom Inconueniances in ye adminifteration thereof—ye Late afsemly begun ye 10th of ye 3^d mo Laft & contenued with fom deffeculty by refon of ye salem men about 2 weeks: but fo it fell out that ye Laft day of ye afsemly wos on a 7th day whereon thay had pafsed a unanimus uote that no more propofitions petetions or other matters fhould bee offerd or brought in but to finish and Conclude whot thay had don or maid Rady ye 2^d day folloing but fee how it happened william Pen that 7th day about twlue at night with John Fenwick & 5 or 6 more Came from Philladelpha in fuch a night of Raine that I haue neuer or selldom feene ye Like ye Refon wos fopofd to bee to Gatt heare befoure all wos Ended: for hee wos detand till then with buifsines about ye Lord Balltemore who is a futtle man & to this day Giues him ye Goe by faing hee will talke with him a twlue-month hence—thus on ye 2^d day things ware fott on fott againe & wos maid a day of Conferance where many quefstens waire put to ye uote—humly propofed by w: P & John Fenwick who know uery well how to tune there Inftrument to fute ye hearers) George I wos Greeud & ftill am without perfhalaty neuer man wos more minft & Run downe then E: B not beeing there to fpake for himfelf & ould dirt throne upon him by w: P: in ye face of ye afemly & others to ye truble of seauerall & himself Loft byte ground for John Fenwicks Rediculos behauer its not worth ye menshining squefing of his hat of 40 times Referuing to hisfelf his Lordfhip of Right in Gouerment & yett wos one of ye afsemly men—ye matters propofd ware many as whather ye Gouerment wos not purchafed togather with ye Land: whather ye firft Consefions ware not to ftand Good: & whather ye truftees ware not ftill oblegied to ftand by ye peeple to fee them fettled in there Rights with many other all which ware Caried in ye affermatiue & Concluded with

that ould ſtory of nemenycontradecente [*nemine contradicente*] & Recorded & ſo to ye Choice of a gouerner for ye years Inſeuing which wos Samuell Jenings being one that so Radely Complyd with them: onely heare Lyes ye knack which I ſopoſe thay did not well perceiue: which wos his Commiſhon from Edward Byllyng Rouled by them as oute of date but yett uncald for out of his hand ſo that hee may yett ſaiue his Cradit & part of his truſt in not throing that up & thus in ſted of an honeſt Condeſending Compliance in y^e^ ſimpleſsity of truth here is bending of wits to ſett that ould Reſoner a work that can nether truſt God nor man As to ye Countrey proceedings about Land there way is this from ye falls which is about 12 miles aboue burlinton to y^e^ ſea is about a 150 miles this deuided into 10 parts are called tenths ye upermoſt downe to burlinton is ye yorkshire or firſt tenth from burlinton 12 miles Lower is ye London or 2^d^ tenth from thence 12 miles Lower is ye Iriſh or 3^d^ tenth & ſo dowward to ye Cape for this tract of Land in Euery 10th there are commis apointed to Giue out warans to any that brings there his deeds & names his tenth hee Goes to pick & chuſe where hee Likes baſt thus thay hauing proceded themſelves Cannot do Less then Giue y^e^ ſame Liberty to others notwithſtanding this will bee to ye damage of E: B or thoſe that ſhall bye Laſt of him ſo after my ariuell I ſhewde to Samuell Jenings & ye Commisheners the Letter of aturny Giuen mee by Edward Byllyng for ye taking up of a Conſiderable quantite of Land for himſelf Gowing Lowry & others as John Hind a Gouldſmith &: c: then affter ſom time I Gott a warane of ye Clark of ye Prouince & had it ſigned by ſix of ye Commiſhiners aforeſaid who at y^e^ ſame time had deliberated upon it & wos all ſo approued by Samuell Jenings.

Thus thinking myſelf furniſhed for ye performence of my truſt I proceded in y^e^ ſouth & diſcouery of ye Cuntry Reuers & Cricks aboue a hundred miles downe ye Grat Reuer into ye bay & ſo at ſertain times for new [now] fiue months from place to place with Extreme hardſhip & hard Laber day & night fare from any hous or habitation a taſk that I did not

well fourefee but when once undertaken I had a feale to performe it there are many Exalent Crick or Rather Reuer that Runes far into ye Cuntry sofefiant to Carry up fhips of Confiderable burden in many of thefe are few or no Inhabitance but upon ye Grate Reuer are many plantations & houfes where prouifions are to bee had thus hauing trauerfhed much of ye Cuntrey I touk up seauerall tracts of Land & hauing marked there bounds Entered them in a book for ye ufes aforefaid now all feemd uery well but as foune as ye afsemly wos ouer Samuell Jenings with Tho Budd & 2 or 3 more comifheners fent for mee in Grate haft to Call in my warran & make uoide whot I had don hauing nothing to Charge mee withall in any Eraguler proceedings but fom new deuice Came in there minds that E: B: fhould haue his Land all in one tenth & for that I might haue a new warran but thay hauing taken up ye baft tenths I faw it would bee much to ye prejudiges of Edward & others fo not Complying therewith wee Reafoned ye Cafe but to no porpos I tould them I fhould make an apeele in this mater which is here offered to thyfelf G: W: A: P: or others if thou fee meete after this Samuell Jenings took a perteculer acount of whot Land & where I had taken it up which did not amount to a 20th part of whot my Letter of aturnye diricted: but there wos fom Littell mifstrey in this thing in Relation to Gouerment that E: B: might bee hedgd up in as littell Compas & ye feru[ants] are [?] Genaral wos forbidden to sirue any for me[e] this seemd Grate unkindnes to a man that had bin maid ye firft Inftrument of fo Good a Cuntry that when hee Comes has not fo much Land to fitt downe on as fom of them haue bought for Lefe then ye ualley of 5th now william biddell Thomas Gardiner & fom of ye more moderate ware againft fuch proceeding but ye Grateft in power would haue it foo—

thus wee are not heare without fom Exarcifes but y^t wch makes us amenes is ye abounding Loue of God wch offten uifits oure foles & that is it that makes all places Comfortable & Giues fatiffaction meetings are heary [*sic*] uery Liuing that makes us flock togather & Glad when

wee feele ye power of God to Rife; this wee hope will preferue us & fettell all Righte in his owne time fo my deare Loue is to thee with G: W: A: P: W: G: Stephen Crifp & others of ye Anfhants of Gods hous [* * * * *torn here*] ye Rememberance of you in this place doth [* * * *torn again*] times melt my fole in ye Loue of God.

[*Signature torn off.*]